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Antiquing in Illinois

ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS

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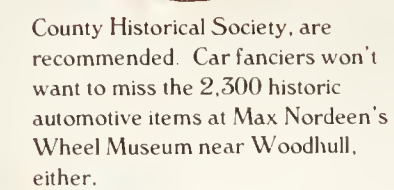
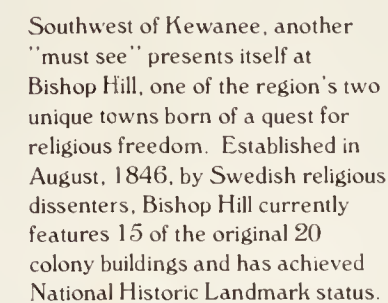
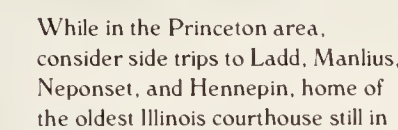
Northern

ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY

Western

Central

Southern



Arsenal (in the middle of the Mississippi), and the John Deere Administration Center, which houses rare agricultural artifacts.

Although the next major antiquing destination is due south on I-74 in Galesburg, home of a 1923 Pullman parlor car which plays host to the Galesburg Railroad Museum, detours west to Alpha, Henderson, and Aledo, site of the Mercer

Known for its antique shops, Swedish imports, pioneer crafts, and delicious Swedish-American foods, the town also offers something special for the art devotee—a ground-floor museum at the Old Colony Church which displays several paintings by original colony resident Olaf Krans.

Traveling north on IL. Rt. 82, be sure to stop at Geneseo before following I-80 to Rock Island-Moline, both rich in riverboat and railway history. For rail buffs, there's the museum of the Greater Quad Cities Railway Historical Society in the Old Rock Island Lines Depot to see and plentiful memorabilia to peruse at Rock Island's Iron Horse Days held in August each year. For added historical interest, consider scheduling stops at the Black Hawk State Historic Site, Hauberg Indian Museum, the Civil War fortress known as the Rock Island

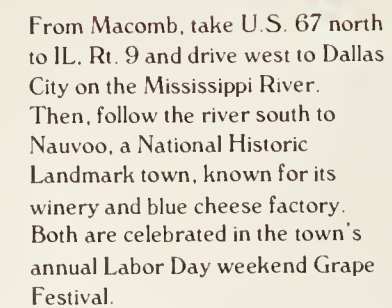
When you do arrive at Galesburg's Railroad Museum, opening for its summer through fall season during the town's annual Railroad Days (featuring 40 events and attractions including everything from a railroadiana show to a spike driving contest), you'll discover this is yet another community which takes its railroad history seriously. In no time at all, however, you'll also learn that there's more to Galesburg than just trains.

For starters, there's Old Main on the campus of Knox College, site of the most well-attended Lincoln-Douglas debate. Then, there's poet and Lincoln biographer Carl Sandburg's fully restored home on Third Street, which includes displays of photographs in addition to his writings.

Other area events of note for antiquers include Knoxville's monthly flea markets and September Civil War Days as well as the Knox County Scenic Drive, an October celebration which features the Wolf Covered Bridge, a year-round attraction approximately eight miles from the junction of IL Rt. 97 and U.S. Rt. 150.

Sixteen miles west of Galesburg is Monmouth, birthplace of Wyatt Earp and host to the mid-September Prime Beef Festival. Here, you'll find frequent flea markets for antiques and the late-September Doll and Teddy-Bear Show for collectors. South of Monmouth, visit Roseville, Bushnell, and Macomb, site of an outstanding annual September

charity antique show and sale. The Macomb area also boasts numerous unique antique shops, one even located in a restored cross-gable barn.



Settled by Mormons in search of religious freedom in 1839, Nauvoo has become widely recognized for its many shops offering antiques, pottery, fudge, and natural baked goods made from freshly milled grain. Campers will not want to miss scenic Nauvoo State Park, conveniently located in the southwest corner of town near many local attractions.

If you're caught in the spell of Old Man River, follow the Great River Road south to the colorful 19th century river town of Warsaw before doubling back and proceeding east to antique-laden Carthage, site of the Old Carthage

Jail, where Mormon leader Joseph Smith was killed by a mob in 1844. South of Carthage on IL. Rt. 94, look to Bowen and Camp Point for added antique bargains.

Next, take U.S. Rt. 24 west to Quincy, one of the most important pre-Civil War industrial cities where Chicago's main rail lines crossed the Mississippi during the mid-1800's. Good neighborhoods to browse in this city of museums, historic buildings, and numerous antique shops include 18th and Broadway and "Calftown" at State and 8th, site of the annual German-heritage Strassenfest.

Before beginning the return leg of your trip, detour south to Barry and Pittsfield and then travel northwest, paralleling the Illinois River, to Mt. Sterling, Rushville, and Astoria. Along the way and for the remainder of your trip, be sure to watch for auctions featuring antiques and rare collectibles.

At Astoria, you enter Fulton County's Spoon River Country, celebrated in the Edgar Lee Master poetic masterpiece *Spoon River Anthology*. From London Mills to the archeologically significant Dickson Mounds, many towns along the gently meandering route

of the Spoon offer antique shops, historic buildings, local museums, and special-interest sites like the Oak Hill Cemetery in Lewistown, which partially inspired Masters' book. During each October, the entire county then joins to welcome the flea markets, food, crafts, and "pioneer" demonstrations of the annual Spoon River Scenic Drive Festival with a blaze of fall colors.

Some final stops in the Peoria area, north of Fulton County along the Illinois River, serve to complete the western leg of your Illinois antiquing adventure. First explored by Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette more than 500 years ago, Peoria currently plays host to Steamboat Days every June in celebration of the days when as many as 1,200 steamboats regularly passed through Peoria's ports. Several antique shops and frequent flea markets exist in the metro-area as well as in such outlying communities as Elmwood, Metamora, Eureka, and Goodfield.

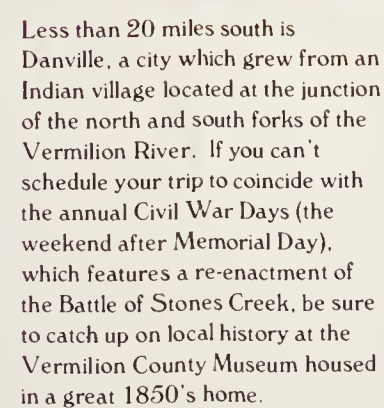
Among some of the other Peoria area attractions are the annual September Rendezvous at the restored Fort Crevecoeur, Morton's Pumpkin Festival and the Wheels 'O Time Museum. The McGlothlin Farm Park in East Peoria, the Lakeview Museum, and the Glen Oak Zoo are all interesting side trips as is Wildlife Prairie Park near Hanna City. Early summer and late travelers should plan a visit to Jubilee College State Park for the Old English Faire (June) and Harvest Fest (late September) held there.

From some of the richest prairie farmland in the northeast to the rolling river country in the southwest, subtly beautiful central Illinois is dotted with historic towns and sites, and abundance of parks and recreational areas, and several major, incredibly picturesque lakes.

It's here in this scenic midland setting that you'll likely be reminded folks in these parts knew Abe Lincoln before the rest of the country started calling him "Mr. President". It's also here—where the memories and relics of the past have been cherished and lovingly handed down!—that some of the most remarkable antiquing opportunities can be found.

Begin your "central" adventure at Watseka, located at the junction of U.S. Rt. 24 and IL Rt. 1 in Ingham County. As you continue your journey south on Rt. 1, be sure to schedule "side road" stops in Wellington and Hoopesdon, host of the annual Labor Day Weekend Sweetcorn Festival, featuring both its namesake and lively hometown parades, on your way to Rossville.

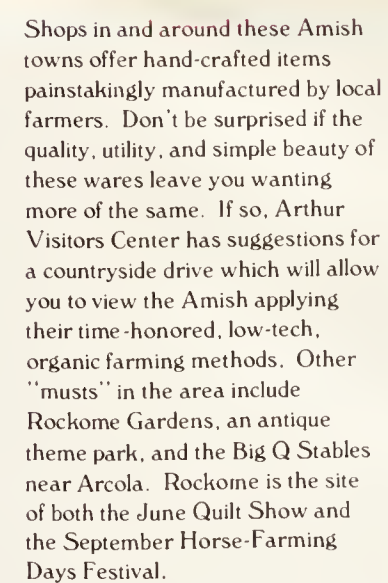
Settled in 1829 at the crossing of the Attica-Paxton Road and the Chicago-Danville Trail, Rossville has been dubbed the "Village of Unusual Shops". Its quiet streets, lined with original street lamps, contain 14 historic buildings and house over 20 antique and specialty shops brim full of period jewelry, glassware, vintage clothing, folk art, and crafts. Among the many other truly special Rossville attractions are a railroad museum and an art gallery/doll museum.



For extra antiquing pleasure, continue south from the Danville area to Paris and Marshall, keeping in mind that some of the biggest bargains are found in the smaller towns.

Next, choose your own scenic route from Marshall west to the Mattoon-Charleston area. Location of frequent flea markets, this area includes the Lincoln Trail, Fox Ridge, and Lincoln Log Cabin State Parks. The Lincoln Log Cabin Historic Site marks the last place where Lincoln's parents lived and has been completely restored. Furnished with accurate period pieces, the home's interior is highlighted during the summer months by costumed guides. Also while in Charleston, make sure to visit Shiloh Cemetery, a major resting place for Civil War veterans and Thomas and Sarah Lincoln.

A short drive north on I-57 will bring you to the Amish Country settlements of Arcola and Arthur. This is a real trip into the "horse and buggy days", so kindly watch for the Amish horse-drawn vehicles which often travel the area byways. As a side benefit of adopting more leisurely ways, you'll be better able to absorb the rhythm of a nearly bygone lifestyle.



To the east of Arcola is the small friendly town of Oakland with several antique and specialty shops, and a number of historic sites.

To reach your next destination, continue north on I-57 to Champaign-Urbana, one of those urban areas where never-ending garage sales make antiquing an activity with countless opportunities for success. A particularly good source of old glass, these garage sales are so plentiful the local paper has taken to listing them in zones for your mapping convenience. If you're in town in February, be sure to also consult the newspaper for the exact date of Urbana's annual Antique Show and Sale.

Straight west of Champaign on IL Rt. 10, you'll find Clinton, where the DeWitt County Museum is located in the Homestead, the former home of Lincoln law partner C. H. Moore and the current site

of the annual September Apple and Pork Festival. On your way to Clinton, be sure to include side trips to Mahomet, Bement, and Wappella. The latter two towns host regular weekly antique auctions featuring something for everyone's taste and wallet, and if you are able to just look without buying, Mahomet's Early American Museum has over 3,000 items on display.

While in the area you might want to stop at one of the state's finest railroad museums, just north of Monticello. On weekends during the summer a real steam locomotive offers rides.

Decatur, due south of Clinton on U.S. Rt. 51, boasts 47 parks, picturesque wooded bluffs on the Sangamon River, and an 80-acre historic district containing buildings, homes, landmarks, and monuments all on the National Register of Historic Sites. The first stop in Lincoln Country and the location of the 1860 Republican Party Convention which nominated Abe "The Railsplitter Lincoln". Decatur hosts several events of special interest including the annual April Antique Show and Sale and the September Yesteryear Fair, which is held on the grounds of the Macon County Museum and which turns time back to the town's 1829 founding.

Next, follow the Sangamon River west (as Abe did in 1831) or take a 40-mile car trip via I-72 to Springfield, where town life still

seems to revolve around the larger-than-life Lincoln. Give yourself enough time to both visit the 25 local antique shops and take in some of the area's major attractions--Lincoln's home and tomb, the restored Lincoln and Herndon Law Offices, and the reconstructed Old State Capitol among them.

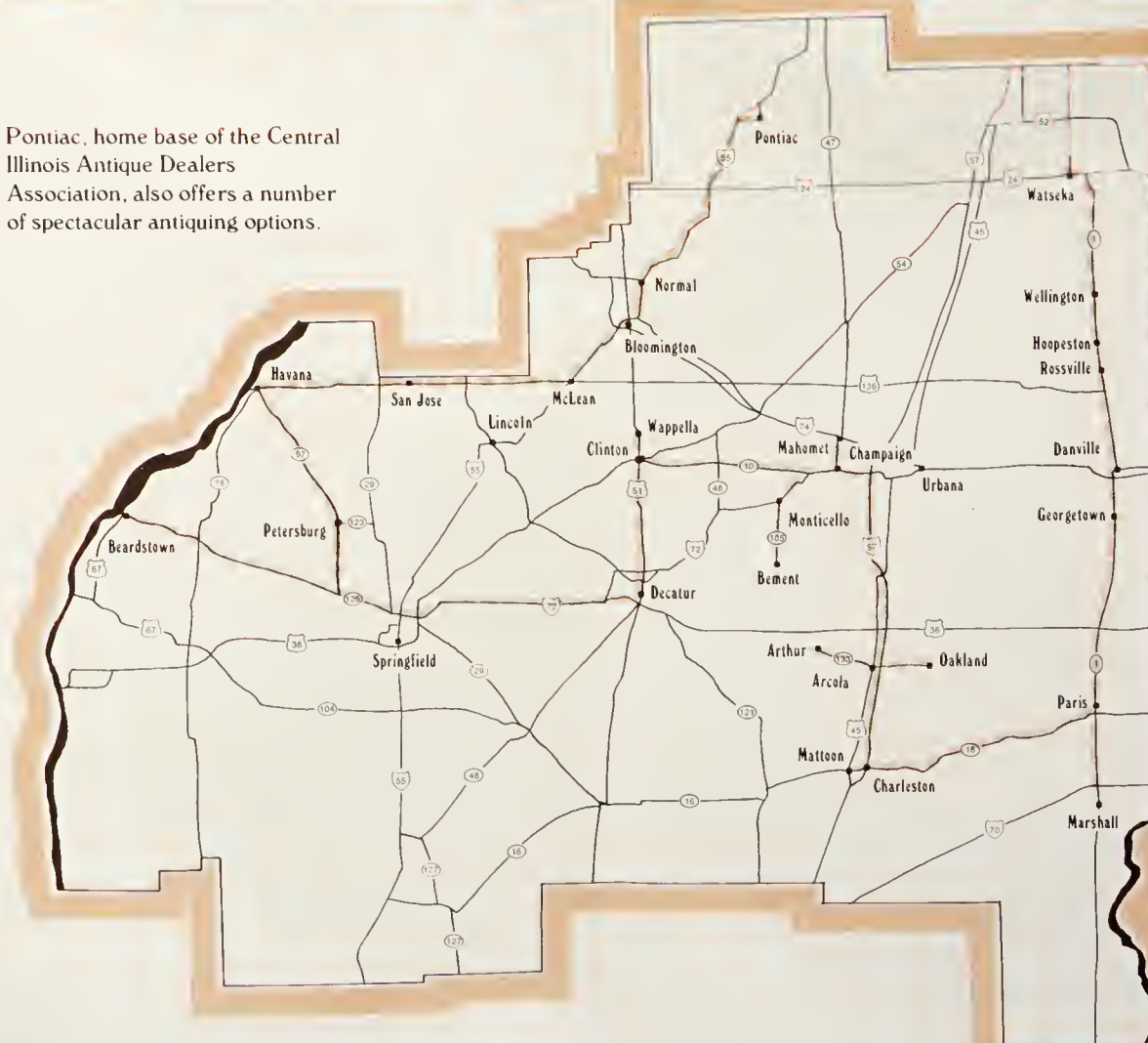
Included in a list of other important "Must sees" are the poet Vachel Lindsay's restored home, the Clayville Rural Life Center and Museum, and Lincoln's New Salem Village State Historic Site where an 1830's pioneer village once home to Lincoln has been flawlessly restored. The park is an excellent picnic or camping spot to pause and refresh yourself before a visit two miles north in Petersburg, where Lincoln employed his surveying skills and where Poet Edgar Lee Masters once lived, and is now buried.

If you're making your antique collecting trip in late September, consider attending the Beardstown (north and west of Springfield on IL Rt. 125) Fall Festival with its huge craft show and flea market. For those who choose driving north on IL Rt. 97 from late summer through fall, Mason County's Melon Country offers some of the finest taste treats around. Drive a bit further north on Rt. 97 and you'll come to Havana on the Illinois River, with its lovely riverfront park and boat landing. Home of the world's most modern fish hatchery, Havana offers antique shops specializing in linens, pictures, small collectibles, and a

complete selection of quilting,
stitchery, and stenciling supplies.

From Havana, follow U.S. Rt. 136 east—stopping, of course, at San Jose and McLean—to complete your “circular” Central Illinois odyssey. If you’re in the area the second weekend after Labor Day, however, make sure to detour to Lincoln for their National Railsplitting Festival featuring a flea market and 19th century crafts.

If you still have room for a few more treasures (and even if you don't), be sure to head north when you come to I-55, your direct route to Bloomington-Normal. Home of several fine museums and two widely regarded universities, Bloomington-Normal also hosts more than a dozen antique shops as well as The Gallery, a quality antique auction and fine art brokerage firm. Other events of interest would have to include the March through May American Passion Play at the Scottish Rite Temple, Miller Zoo, and Clover Lawn, an exceptional example of late Victorian architecture. Nearby



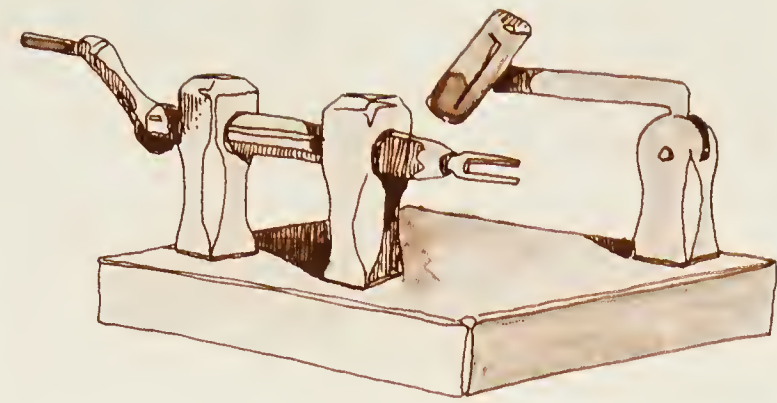
A triple treat of urban, suburban, and rural antiquing awaits those with Northern Illinois on their travel itineraries. From the quaint Victorian streets of Galena, to the urban byways of the "City with Big Shoulders", all roads in this region lead to antiquing adventure.

For a leisurely start to your North-

ern Illinois excursion, plan on stopping at Galena first. Located in the northwestern corner of Illinois, historic Galena is a true vacation destination featuring more than 60 antique shops and 30 plus bed-and-breakfasts in restored Victorian houses. Festivals and special events occur year-round and include the Ulysses S. Grant Antique Market

in May; tours of historic homes in June, September and December; and a flea market and antique auto show in July.

From Galena, head east on U.S. Rt. 20 to the quaint towns of Elizabeth and Stockton. Continue on U.S. Rt. 20 to Rockford. Once in Rockford, don't miss Victorian



Village, an area featuring 15 restored homes with more than 60 shops of antiques and gifts or the Antique Mall, which houses 20,000 sq. ft. of antiques. Rockford also boasts 50 other antique shops, many nationally recognized, specializing in primitives, antique autos and clothing.

Continue east on U.S. Rt. 20 to downtown Marengo turning north on IL Rt. 23 for a few blocks and then turning east on IL Rt. 176 to Union Road which takes you into the town of Union, home of the Illinois Railway Museum and the Seven Acres Antique Village and Museum (featuring America's largest public collection of antique phonographs and music boxes).

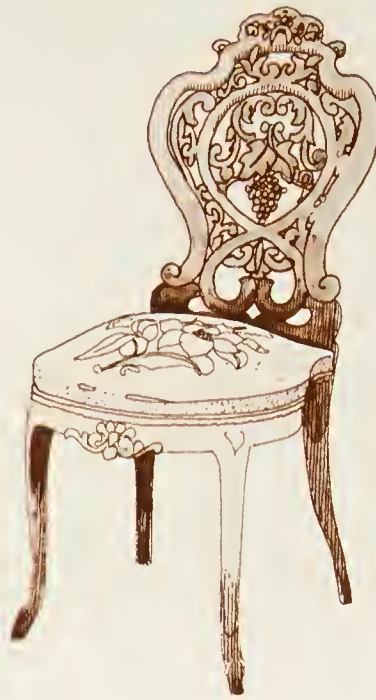
Return to IL. Rt. 176 east to the intersection of U.S. Rt. 14. Take U.S. 14 northwest to the tiny hamlet of Ridgefield featuring 32 shops housed in 7 buildings within a two block area. Stop and dine at a charming vintage tea room for tasty sandwiches and homemade ice cream.

To get to Woodstock next, return to U.S. 14 west and follow the Woodstock Square signs. Visit the many shops located on and around the historic Victorian Woodstock Square. Treat yourself to a performance in the restored 1890's Opera House, where the likes of Orson Welles and Paul Newman once performed.

Return to IL Rt. 47 north to the town of Hebron, turn east on IL Rt. 173 where you will find an "antiquer's mecca" in the town of Richmond. Located just south of the Wisconsin border, this quaint little town, where iron horse hitching posts line Main Street, features some of the largest antique shops in the state.

Leaving Richmond, head south on IL Rt. 31 browsing through the towns of McHenry, Carpentersville and Dundee before arriving at Elgin. Home of the world-famous Elgin watch, the Elgin area currently plays host to the Fox River Trolley Museum, which offers nostalgic three-mile rides aboard genuine trolleys from spring through fall.

Now, take I-90 east to almost any one of Chicago's northwest suburban communities for more antiquing action. Of particular interest is the Barrington-Long Grove area. At the crossroads of IL Rts. 83 and 53, Long Grove features dozens of specialty shops, unusual restaurants, and a variety of events which herald the community's rich German heritage. There's even an eatery which auctions antiques while you eat! Like the chair you're



Then, follow the Sheridan Road/Lake Shore Drive route south into the heart of Chicago--making sure to mark North Clark, North Halstead, North Lincoln, North Wells, West Armitage, and West Belmont on your city "antiquing" map. While October visitors won't want to miss the annual Chicago International Antiques Show at Navy Pier, the largest vetted show in the U.S., the nearby suburb of Oak Park, once home to architect Frank Lloyd Wright and

author Ernest Hemingway, stands ever ready to welcome visitors year-round to its history-rich, antique-laden community.

From Oak Park, your most direct link with the Fox River Valley towns of Aurora, Batavia, Geneva, and St. Charles is IL Rt. 64 or I-88. In St. Charles, widely regarded as the "antique center of the Midwest", there are more than 100 individually owned shops devoted to quality antiques and collectibles. Dealers from throughout the 50 states and Italy regularly schedule buying trips to this region. Landmark buildings from the 1800's containing specialty shops and restaurants are also sprinkled throughout the area. What you can't find in those establishments will more than likely surface at the first-Saturday-Q-Sunday-of-every-month (rain or shine!) Kane County Antique Flea Market. Held at the Kane County Fairgrounds on Randall Road between IL Rts. 64 & 38, this is one of the largest flea markets in the world with as many as 250,000 annual visitors from the U.S. and beyond.

Work your way south on IL Rt. 59 to I-80 and capture the treasures of the past in the towns of Crete, Beecher, Frankfort, Wilmington and Joliet in Will County. In Crete and Beecher you'll be delighted to discover 40 dealers in 11 shops featuring country antiques, handmade quilts, glass, primitives and miniatures. Travel west on I-80 to Grundy County and visit the antique shops of Morris. Proceed west to LaSalle County with side trips to Seneca, Marseilles, Ottawa, Utica,

LaSalle/Peru and Starved Rock State Park.

These scenic points anchor the southwest end of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Corridor-a 120 mile "urban cultural park" that offers a rich architectural landscape. 11 state parks and over 200 historic sites and districts. The corridor, having served as an important transportation route for native Indians, French fur traders, pioneers and early industrialists, harbors a collection of 19th century canal towns. Several of these, and most notably Marseilles, are popular among antiquers. While travelers heading westward on U.S. Rt. 34 will be able to enjoy the Time Was Village Museum in Mendota (housing one of the largest collections of antique toys in the country), those adventuring along U.S. Rt. 52 can treat themselves to a tour of President Ronald Reagan's boyhood home in Dixon. Following IL Rt. 2 to IL Rt. 64, keep your eyes open for the towns of Oregon (home of White Pines State Park and the Autumn on Parade Festival), Mt. Carroll (with its cobblestone town square), and Savanna, where magnificent bluffs overlook the mighty Mississippi River.

No matter how you "go west, Antiquers", be sure to eventually end up on the Great River Road (IL Rt. 84) which follows the Mississippi River along the state's westernmost border. Go far enough north and you'll happen upon Hanover, home of the world's largest duck hatchery and your final northern Illinois antiquing destination.

Northern Southern

For your unequaled "southern exposure" to antiquing Illinois style in no less than 36 antique districts, there's probably no better place to start your excursion than in historic Cairo, where the mighty Ohio and Mississippi Rivers join at the southernmost tip of the state. One of the first sites settled in Illinois, Cairo and the surrounding areas are known as "Little Egypt" and serve as home to the Mound City National Cemetery, burial grounds of 4,800 Union and Confederate soldiers.

From Cairo, take IL Rts. 3 and then 127 north to the Anna-Jonesboro area (where regularly scheduled auctions are popular local attractions) on your way to Alto Pass, site of the 111-foot Bald Knob Cross, the tallest Christian monument in North America.

As you meander north to DuQuoin, location of the late-August DuQuoin State Fair, and Pinckneyville, home of the annual September Pinckneyville Thresher Days, watch for side of the road "Antiques This Way" and

Belle-Claire Exposition Center, the Belleville Antiques Fair in September, and "The Gateway to the West Antiques Exposition" in nearby Waterloo. Also worth a side trip is the June Fort de Chartres Rendezvous at Prairie du Rocher, a revival celebration of pioneer America. Other interesting local attractions include the Our Lady of the Snows National Shrine and "The Way of Lights", a spectacular late-November to early-January display of 100,000 light sculptures.

Stops in Collinsville, near the prehistoric Indian metropolis known as the "Cahokia Mounds", and Edwardsville should be included in your north-to-Alton antiquing itinerary. Home of the early-June Alton Landing Festival on the banks of the Mississippi, Alton and surrounding communities include some 60 antique shops in their offerings. While in the area, don't forget to follow the Great River Road north and west to the tiny towns of Elsah, an old steamboat town now on the National Register

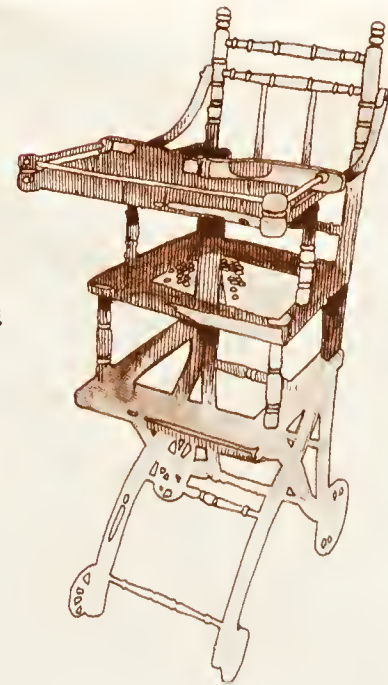


"Junque Barn" announcements. Both typically direct you to off-the-beaten-path bargains of a lifetime.

At Pinckneyville, head northwest on IL Rt. 13 to the Belleville area. Here, you'll find third-weekend-of-the-month flea markets at the

of Historic Sites, and Grafton, where the Brussels Ferry (located off IL Rt. 100, near Pere Marquette State Park) regularly transports visitors back and forth across the Illinois River.

Next, backtrack on the Great River



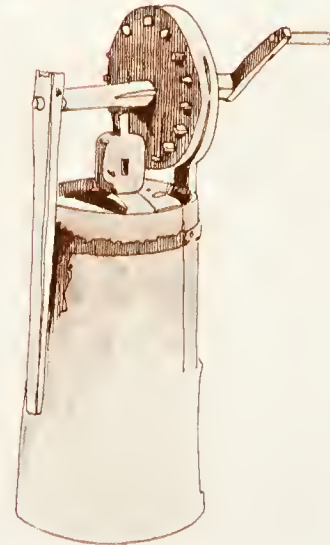
Road to I-70 near Granite City to begin your eastward journey to Vandalia, site of Illinois' "second" State Capital and home of the annual June Grand Levee celebration featuring tours, food, crafts, and working blacksmith demonstrations among other activities. If you're traveling with children (or are children at heart!), be sure to continue east on I-70 to Effingham, where the Lincoln Land Amusement Park, the largest indoor facility of its kind in the world, can be found.

From Effingham, your most direct route to non-stop antiquing opportunities follows I-57 south, first to Kinmundy, where Ingram's Log Cabin Village features a collection of authentic log cabins transplanted from their original Midwest locations.

A few miles down the road, watch for signs of Salem, birthplace of orator William Jennings Bryan, and Centralia, a coal and railroad town named after the Illinois Central Railroad. While in Centralia, schedule a stop at the city park where Engine 2500, one of the largest steam engines ever built, resides.

If possible, plan your next I-57 stop in Mt. Vernon in late August for the Southern Illinois Sweet Corn and Watermelon Festival or in mid-September for the annual Cedarhurst Craft Fair. Other activities to squeeze in between your antiquing forays include the Mitchell Art Museum, housing American arts in various genre, and the Mt. Vernon Courthouse, where Lincoln the Lawyer and Red Cross founder Clara Barton once plied their trades.

Travelers continuing south on I-57 will have to make some decisions at the junction of IL Rt. 13. They can either turn west to shop Carbondale, home of Southern Illinois University, and Murphysboro, host of the annual Apple Festival the second weekend



of September, or they can travel east to Marion, Harrisburg, and Shawneetown, gateway to the great Shawnee National Forest. If the choice is east, the Marion area offers local antique auctions and some of the finest antique shops in the Midwest. In between the antiquing, you might go fishing or boating at Lake of Egypt or Crab Orchard Lake. This is also a prime goose hunting area. Those who are southern Illinois scouting pros recommend you take the time to do it all!

Wherever you end up, just make sure you eventually find your way south to IL. Rt. 146 and the towns of Golconda, where the Pope County Deer Festival is held on the Courthouse grounds every November, and Vienna, home of the extraordinarily picturesque Heron Park Nature Preserve, one of the state's most unique conservation areas.

To conclude your sensational antiquing excursion in southern Illinois, just follow I-24 as far as you can go in the state to the town of



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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